

**IV. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Currently Amended) A gaming machine comprising:  
a data reading unit for reading character data from at least two inserted trading cards which are inserted by a player, each trading card storing a set of character data;  
an advancing unit for advancing a game based on the read character data;  
a combining unit for combining at least two sets of character data when a first predetermined condition is satisfied in the advanced game;  
a determining unit for determining at least one set of character data of a reward trading card based on the combined character data; and  
a payout unit for paying out the reward trading card to the player, the reward trading card storing which stores the determine set of character data,
2. (Canceled)
3. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine according to claim 1, wherein the payout unit includes writing unit for writing the determine set of character data in the reward trading card.
4. (Canceled)
5. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine according to claim 1, wherein the set of character data includes capability and attribute values.
6. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine according to claim 1, wherein the payout unit includes printing unit for printing an image of the determined set of character data on a surface of the reward trading card.
7. (Currently Amended) A gaming machine comprising:

three slots into which two or three trading cards can be inserted by a player, each trading card storing a set of character data;

a card reader which reads a set of character data from the inserted trading card;

an advancing device which advances a game based on the read character data;

a combining device which combines at least two sets of character data, when a prescribed condition is satisfied in the advanced game;

a determining device which determines at least one set of character data of a reward trading card; and

a payout device which pays out the reward trading card to the player, the reward trading card storing the determined set of character data.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Previously Presented) A method for controlling a gaming machine, comprising steps of:

reading character data from at least two inserted trading cards, each trading card storing a set of character data;

advancing a game based on the read character data;

receiving an instruction of combining the character data, when a first prescribed condition is satisfied in the advanced game;

combining at least two sets of character data in response to the instructions;

determining at least one set of character data of a reward trading card based on the combined character data; and

writing the set of updated character data to the reward trading card.

10. (Previously Presented) The method for controlling the gaming machine according to claim 9, further comprising steps of:

changing the character data based on results of the game.

11. (Currently Amended) A gaming machine comprising:  
three slots into which at least two trading cards can be inserted by a player,  
each of the trading card storing a set of character data;  
a card reader which reads character data from the inserted trading cards;  
a payout device for paying out a reward trading card to the player, the reward  
trading card storing the set of character data; and  
a controller which executes a predetermined computer program, the controller  
being connected to the card reader and the payout device,

wherein the controller causes the card reader to read the character data,  
advances a game based on the read character data, combines at least two sets of  
character data when a first predetermined condition is satisfied in the advanced  
game, determines the set of character data of the reward trading card based on the  
combined character data, and causes the payout device to pay out the reward  
trading card which stores the determined set of character data.

12. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine according to claim 1, further  
comprising

a changing unit for changing a number of combining set and a number of  
determining set in response to proceedings of the game.

13. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine according to claim 1, further  
comprising

a generating unit for generating a set of character data when a second  
predetermined condition is satisfied in the advanced game, wherein  
the determining unit determines one set of character data of a reward trading  
card based on the second predetermined condition, and  
the payout unit pays out the reward trading card storing the determined set of  
character data.

14. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine according to claim 1,  
wherein

the combining unit combines the entirety of the read character data, and  
the determining unit determines the entirety of the rewarded character data  
based on the combined character data.

15. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine according to claim 1,  
wherein

the combining unit combines the entirety of the read character data, and  
the determining unit determines a part of the rewarded character data based  
on the combined character data.

16. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine according to claim 1,  
wherein

the combining unit combines a part of the read character data, and  
the determining unit determines the entirety of the rewarded character data  
based on the combined character data.

17. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine according to claim 1,  
wherein

the combining unit combines a part of the read character data, and  
the determining unit determines a part of the rewarded character data based  
on the character data.

18. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine according to claim 1,  
further comprising

an updating unit for updating the character data based on the results of the  
game.